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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7687
INFO RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA IMMEDIATE 0246
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE 0140

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 000440

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA-A/S SHANNON, DAS ROBINSON, WHA/CAR (ACADIEUX)
(VDEPIRRO) (WSMITH)
WHA/EPSC (MROONEY) (FCORNEILLE)
SANTO DOMINGO FOR FCS AND FAS
TREASURY FOR ERIN NEPHEW
INR/RES (RWARNER)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/06/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [EAID](#) [SNAR](#) [ASEC](#) [SOCI](#) [ELAB](#)
PGOV, OAS, JM, CU, XL
SUBJECT: JAMAICA: FOREIGN MINISTER AGREES CUBA MUST
DEMOCRATIZE TO JOIN OAS, EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER VENEZUELA,S
INFLUENCE IN CARIBBEAN, DESIRES STRONGER ECONOMIC TIES
BETWEEN U.S. AND JAMAICA

REF: A. A. KINGSTON 437
[1](#)B. B. KINGSTON 439
[1](#)C. C. KINGSTON 405

Classified By: JAMES T. HEG FOR REASONS 1.4 (a and d)

Summary

[1](#)1. (SBU) On May 29, 2009, Charge visited the Government of Jamaica,s (GOJ) Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) for final meeting with Minister Dr. Kenneth Baugh. Charge and the Minister discussed a number of topics, including: the upcoming Organization of American States (OAS) Foreign Ministers (FM) meeting and the prospects for Cuba joining the association; Jamaica,s diplomatic presence in Haiti; the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI); the Obama administration,s policies in the Caribbean; Venezuela,s influence in the region; and National Security Minister Dwight Nelson,s controversial remarks before the Jamaican Police Federation.

Transitions

[1](#)2. (U) The meeting took place at the MFAFT, with Permanent Secretary Gail Mathurin, Undersecretary for Bilateral Relations Paul Robotham, and Emboff also in attendance. The Charge reminded the Minister that he would soon be departing post and informed him that Counselor for Political-Economic Affairs Lloyd Moss would be Charge until the arrival of the new Deputy Chief of Mission, Isiah Parnell, in August, 2009. The Minister wished the Charge the best, noted that the GOJ had received the request regarding the proposed new U.S. ambassador to Jamaica, and said that GOJ would soon issue a positive written response to the Department from the Permanent Secretary.

Cuba and the OAS

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Charge thanked the Minister for the hospitality the GOJ and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) had shown Assistant Secretary (AS) Thomas Shannon during his visit earlier that month to Jamaica for the meeting of CARICOM,s Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR). Dr.

Baugh noted that, at Caricom,s recent summit with the Government of Cuba (GOC), Prime Minister (PM) Bruce Golding had expressed GOJ,s support for the orderly and methodical process of engagement between GOC and the U.S.

¶4. (C) The Charge pointed out that the U.S. had signaled some flexibility in its approach to Cuba and would be willing to open a dialogue with the OAS Foreign Ministers regarding Cuba,s &eventual reintegration8 consistent with the principles of &democracy and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.8 The Charge also noted that AS Shannon hoped to telephone the Minister later that day to discuss the issue.

¶5. (C) Baugh noted that there was widespread support in the OAS for the revocation of Article 6 of the OAS Charter and for dealing with the U.S.-Cuban embargo issue separately. He advised that the Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister had visited Jamaica earlier in the week and had told Baugh that Cuba would like to see Article 6 revoked for political reasons, although Cuba doesn,t necessarily want to join OAS at this time. The Minister and the Charge both agreed that Cuba would have difficulty meeting the democratic requirements for OAS membership. The Minister also noted that the PM had recently made a statement calling for the OAS to &do right8 by the Cuban people, to GOC,s chagrin.

¶6. (C) Baugh pointed out that several members of OAS have presented resolutions on this matter. Nicaragua,s was quite strident and anti-American and Jamaica wasn,t interested in signing onto it, while Costa Rica,s had been withdrawn. At that time, it was unclear whether the current resolution under debate would require Cuba to submit a charter and agree

to democratic conditions for membership.

Haiti

¶7. (C) Charge encouraged the GOJ to reach out to Haiti, especially on security issues such as guns and drugs, and asked whether the GOJ still planned to open a mission in Haiti. The Permanent Secretary answered that, although the GOJ has stationed several police liaison officers in Port-au-Prince, due to budgetary constraints there were no longer immediate plans to open a mission or consulate in the capital. Apparently there had been plans to share costs and operate out of the Bahamian mission, but those plans have been put on hold as well due to GOJ,s financial situation.

Caribbean Basin Security Initiative

¶8. (U) The Charge expressed pleasure at reports of the positive CBSI meeting in Paramaribo last week, although the Minister said that he,d yet to receive the report on the meeting. The Charge advised that it was vital that Jamaica,s voice be heard in CBSI.

The Nelson Controversy

¶9. (C) The Charge expressed concern and unease over National Security Minister Dwight Nelson,s May 27 remarks before the Jamaican Police Federation, at which he,d seemed to suggest GOJ sympathy with and leniency toward police officers accused of official misconduct (Reftel A). The Charge emphasized that GOJ,s failure to continue to pursue police reform and to hold police officers accountable for abuses might jeopardize a number of operational programs the U.S. currently funds in Jamaica. Minister Baugh said that he shared these concerns, had spoken with the PM regarding the controversy, and assured the Charge that the GOJ was dealing with the statements internally and would soon issue a clarification as to GOJ policy. (NOTE: Later that evening, Minister Nelson retracted his comments (Reftel B) End Note).

U.S.-Caribbean Relations

¶10. (C) The Minister noted that there seems to be a very pleasant and optimistic mood in the Caribbean in response to the new Obama administration, what he described as a sense of opening doors⁸ and the prospect of improved relations. However, the minister called for greater economic cooperation and attention to Jamaica and CARICOM on the part of the U.S. Given its inability to fund its own economic stimulus package, the Minister called for the U.S. to recognize how the global economic crisis was affecting vulnerable highly-indebted small economies such as Jamaica,s.

¶11. (C) The Minister maintained that the U.S. and other developed countries should be doing more to assist the GOJ in developing its economy. He pointed out that Jamaica had made some very painful decisions in its recent budget package and that this was affecting the country politically. The Minister expressed the belief that the U.S. and other developed economies should be helping to develop economies in smaller countries, opining that, without development assistance, free trade puts small island countries like Jamaica at an economic disadvantage. The Minister said that Jamaica was seeking assistance from both Canada and the U.S. and wanted the developed world to see Jamaica and the Caribbean as partners. The Permanent Secretary pointed out that both the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the African Economic Community (AEC) were represented at the G20, and felt that CARICOM should be as well. The Charge gave assurances that the U.S. was focusing on Jamaica and on the region.

Venezuela

¶12. (C) The Permanent Secretary pointed out that Venezuela was increasing its ties and strengthening its relationships in the Caribbean, especially among the smaller islands. With stronger ties to the U.S., the Caribbean could avoid such Venezuelan influence. She pointed out that Jamaica had never engaged in the type of strident language that Venezuela has used in criticizing the U.S. The Charge suggested that the Minister had an opportunity to share these views at the OAS FM meeting in San Pedro Sula, Honduras on June 2. Both Baugh and Robotham expressed concern at reports they had heard that the Secretary might not attend the OAS General Assembly. The Charge noted that the Jamaican Embassy in Washington had been notified of the Secretary,s plans to attend and was hoping to have a breakfast meeting with CARICOM foreign ministers the morning of June 2. Baugh expressed satisfaction and relief at this news.

Conclusion

¶13. (C) The Minister appeared supportive of the U.S. position that Cuba must meet democratic benchmarks before being allowed to join the OAS and was cool to the anti-U.S. language in Nicaragua,s OAS resolution, while concerned by Venezuela,s influence among the smaller CARICOM countries. Baugh seemed to present the GOJ as a reasonable and trustworthy interlocutor in the OAS and CARICOM between the U.S. and more radical nations in the region such as Venezuela and Nicaragua. His calls for stronger economic ties between the U.S., Jamaica and CARICOM likely stem from the desire for greater U.S. recognition of Jamaica,s economic difficulties and the painful political steps the current government has taken to address them and seek ways for Jamaica to obtain more international support (Reftel C). End conclusion.

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